# Building the future: Innovation and peace at the Autonomous University of Campeche

# Construyendo el futuro: Innovación y paz en la Universidad Autónoma de Campeche

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**Abstract**

The Autonomous University of Campeche has integrated the culture of peace into its Equality and University Inclusion unit, with the aim of strengthening its presence within the institution and raising awareness among the university community. The general purpose was to promote the culture of peace through continuous activities involving management, teaching, research, and university outreach. The methodology employed was based on incorporating peace education into the curriculum, implementing a series of annually planned activities that continuously raise awareness among the entire university community. Results: these actions have enriched the University's core functions, fostering a harmonious environment across different institutional areas. Conclusions: the integration of the culture of peace and university inclusion into the curriculum is key to shaping generations committed to peace.

**Resumen**

La Universidad Autónoma de Campeche ha integrado la cultura de paz a su unidad de Igualdad e Inclusión universitaria, con el objetivo de fortalecer su presencia en la institución y sensibilizar a la comunidad universitaria. El propósito general fue promover la cultura de paz a través de actividades continuas que involucren a la gestión, docencia, investigación y extensión universitaria. La metodología empleada implicó como base retomar la transversalización en el currículo, se implementa una serie de actividades planificadas anualmente que permiten sensibilizar a toda la comunidad universitaria de manera constante. Resultados, estas acciones han enriquecido las funciones sustantivas de la Universidad, promoviendo un ambiente armónico entre las diversas áreas de la institución. Conclusiones, la integración de la cultura de paz y la inclusión universitaria en el currículo es clave para construir generaciones comprometidas con la paz.
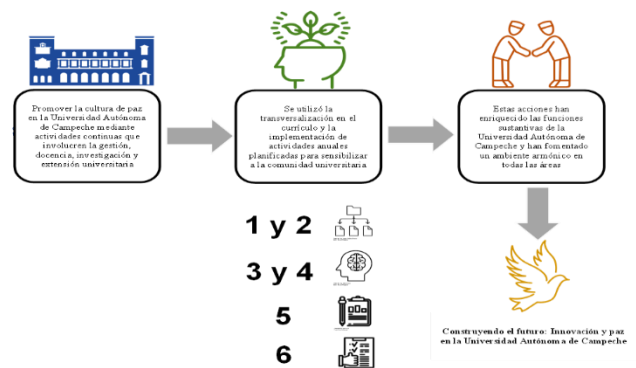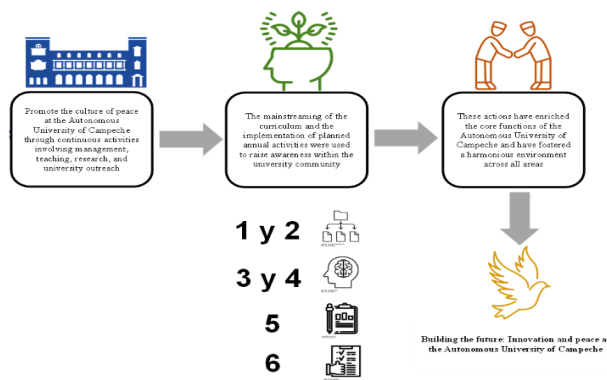
Culture of Peace, Higher education, Mainstreaming

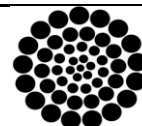Cultura de Paz, Educación superior, Transversalización

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## Introduction

In the pursuit of peacebuilding, social well-being was deemed essential, involving the integration of young people into educational and labour spheres, promoting economic development from the grassroots level, and rebuilding the social fabric (Niño-Gutiérrez et al., 2016). In this context, the decision was made to support youth rather than criminalize them; addictions were approached as a public health issue rather than a law enforcement problem. The creation of a culture of peace strengthened the community, and through education, the change was profound and enduring.

This article aims to contribute to addressing the following question: How can the Autonomous University of Campeche effectively coordinate and integrate the culture of peace, equality, and inclusion into its academic curriculum to maximize the impact of these actions on the awareness and holistic education of its university community?

To achieve peace, challenges such as extreme poverty, lack of job opportunities, increasing illiteracy, and discrimination based on ethnicity, age, sexual orientation, gender, physical condition, economic and social status, as well as all forms of structural and direct violence linked to abuse of authority, were addressed.

Consequently, the eradication of these abuses was proposed to build an environment based on principles of justice, development, and equal rights, thus promoting a democratic distribution of power. In this way, education for peace was conceived as a proposal aimed at the recognition, respect for rights, and liberation of all human beings, with the objective of achieving genuine participation in transformative processes, grounded in the creation of just and equitable societies (Paz et al., 2019).

A supporting idea for this argument is the direct relationship between peace education and social transformation. Education should not only focus on imparting knowledge but also on shaping citizens who can recognize and respect the rights of others, actively promoting their participation in processes that foster equity and justice.

By empowering individuals through human rights education and peaceful conflict resolution, the foundation is laid for the democratic redistribution of power and the development of inclusive and sustainable societies.

The holistic education of students was implemented in universities through various means: curricular, extracurricular, cultural activities, sports, and tutoring, among others, in which teachers played a significant role. This education was viewed as a means to transform the current culture and give way to a new culture of peace, which was built through human interactions.

An idea that supports this argument is the central role of multiple educational spaces (both curricular and extracurricular) in the comprehensive formation of students. These spaces not only foster academic development but also interpersonal skills and values that contribute to building a culture of peace.

It was recommended that this process begin within the family and school, involving other actors and enabling new ways of perceiving and resolving conflicts at various levels of human relationships and in spaces of social, family, school, and political interaction (Pérez & Godin, 2020).

It reinforces the importance of developing new ways to perceive and manage conflicts, which is essential for building a more equitable and democratic society. Therefore, the integration of key actors at different levels strengthens the transformation towards a culture of peace that transcends the educational environment and permeates society as a whole.

The central purpose of this paper is to analyse how the Autonomous University of Campeche has strengthened the culture of peace through its integration into the University's Equality and Inclusion Unit, highlighting the importance of integrating these themes across the academic curriculum. The aim is to demonstrate how planned and coordinated actions contribute to the continuous awareness-raising of the university community and the enhancement of the institution's core functions, promoting an environment of peace and equity among new generations of students.

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It is important to highlight the social impact of the negotiator's role in disseminating results across various social environments, promoting informational campaigns in educational institutions, family welfare institutions, and community actions, fostering spaces for discussion and debate, and adopting an active and creative stance that contributes to the prestige of reconciliation and peace (Villa et al., 2020).

It emphasizes the importance of the negotiator's role in promoting peace and reconciliation through the dissemination of results in various social environments. A statement that supports this position is that the negotiator acts as a bridge between conflicting parties and society, facilitating the flow of critical information that fosters understanding and dialogue within the community. Through educational campaigns, not only in academic institutions but also in family welfare organizations and community actions, a conducive environment for constructive discussion is created.

Additionally, the negotiator's role is essential in promoting active civil society participation in reconciliation processes, creating spaces for debate and reflection on social issues.

By adopting a creative and proactive stance, the negotiator not only strengthens conflict resolution but also helps legitimize and elevate peace processes. Thus, their function goes beyond simple mediation, becoming a key player in long-term social change.

The integration of the culture of peace into the university curriculum in any of its axes allowed university students not only to anchor educational content to their discipline or field of knowledge but also to connect with social reality, making their learning more meaningful by being oriented toward current reality. Additionally, it provided them with the ability to develop critical thinking linked to social justice and sustainable human development, recognize the nature of conflicts, and contribute to the construction of environments of solidarity and respect for equitable and mutual benefit (Ochoa, 2021).

Hence, the research question aligned with the aforementioned purpose is: How does the integration of the culture of peace into the University's equality and inclusion unit and its incorporation into the academic curriculum contribute to strengthening the core functions of the Autonomous University of Campeche (UACam) and to the continuous awareness-raising of its university community?

The study of the culture of peace at the Autonomous University of Campeche is embedded in a contemporary theoretical framework that emphasizes peace education as a cross-cutting axis in the comprehensive formation of students. This framework, supported by research from databases such as Scopus, Web of Science, SciELO, Semantic Scholar, and Dimension, highlights the importance of integrating values such as social justice, equity, and respect for human rights into educational programs. Authors like Trujillo et al. (2024), in line with perspectives on peace in higher education, stress the need to coordinate institutional actions to achieve a sustained impact on community awareness. This integration promotes a critical pedagogy that not only educates for peace but also transforms social and cultural environments through conflict resolution and democratic participation.

## Methodology

This study was conducted using a qualitative approach with a descriptive-analytical design. This approach allows for the exploration and understanding of the integration of the culture of peace, equality, and inclusion into the academic curriculum of the Autonomous University of Campeche, as well as an evaluation of the impact of these actions on raising awareness within the university community.

The research was carried out at the Autonomous University of Campeche, focusing on the educational programs that have incorporated the culture of peace and equality and inclusion since the implementation of the curricula in 2009. The study participants include key members of the university community, such as faculty directors, coordinators of the Peace Committees, teachers, students, and administrative staff.

Data collection was conducted using the following techniques:

i.   *Document analysis*, the study reviewed curricula, constitutive records of the Peace Committees, annual work agendas, and other related institutional documents to analyse how the culture of peace and University Inclusion have been integrated and mainstreamed into the academic curriculum.

ii.  *Participant observation*, participant observation was conducted during workshops, conferences, and peace circles organized by the Peace Committees, with the aim of documenting the dynamics of these activities and their influence on the university community.

To ensure the validity and rigor of the findings, data triangulation techniques were employed, contrasting information obtained through interviews, focus groups (Valencia-Gutiérrez et al., 2019), document analysis, and participant observation. Additionally, the results were reviewed with some key participants to confirm the accuracy and relevance of the interpretations.

The study acknowledges the potential for bias in participants' responses, as most of them are actively involved in the Peace Committees or University Inclusion actions. Furthermore, the study is limited to a single educational institution, which may restrict the generalization of the findings to other universities or educational contexts.

The contribution of this article lies in its enhancement of the understanding and strengthening of the culture of peace within the context of higher education, specifically at the Autonomous University of Campeche.

By analysing the integration of the culture of peace into the University's Equality and Inclusion Unit (EIU), the article provides a detailed insight into how mainstreaming these values into the academic curriculum and institutional activities can positively influence the university community's awareness. This study not only highlights the importance of the culture of peace as a central axis in the holistic education of students but also provides evidence of best practices implemented to ensure that these values are effectively internalized across the entire university community.

By documenting and evaluating these practices, the article offers a model that other higher education institutions could adapt and adopt, thereby contributing to the creation of a more just, supportive, and peaceful educational environment.

Moreover, the article underscores the need for effective coordination and structured planning to avoid duplication of efforts and maximize the impact of peace and equity initiatives. This approach ensures that awareness-raising actions are more effective, which in turn enriches the university's core functions in management, teaching, research, and outreach.

In sum, the article represents a valuable contribution to the field of education for peace, offering a deep reflection on the relevance and practical implementation of the culture of peace in higher education, with implications that can extend to other educational contexts and contribute to the formation of citizens committed to building a more equitable and peaceful society.

**Results**

Peace Education has been directed towards the teaching of conflict resolution, as conflicts are a constant in social life, reflecting the diversity of interests and perspectives. The aim has been to foster the development of attitudes, values, behaviours, and conduct such as respect for individuals, solidarity, justice, freedom, equality, tolerance, participation, among others, with the goal of contributing to the construction of a democratic culture (Esquivel & García, 2018).

A key idea supporting this argument is that peace education not only addresses conflict resolution but also fosters the development of fundamental values such as justice, equality, solidarity, and tolerance. These values are essential not only for peaceful coexistence but also serve as the foundation for building a strong democratic culture, where individuals can actively participate in social and political life, respecting the rights of others.

The emphasis on attitudes and behaviours that promote equality and freedom, as mentioned, aligns with the notion that a true democratic culture is sustained when citizens are trained not only cognitively but also ethically and emotionally.

Peace education helps to form critical citizens who not only identify conflicts but are also capable of transforming them constructively, promoting social justice and active participation in creating more equitable societies. This highlights the importance of education that transcends the classroom and promotes peace as a daily practice in all spheres of social life.

The inclusion of cross-cutting themes in university curricula, such as environmental education, peace education, or education for equality, has underscored the value of cross-cutting approaches as a response to the purpose of education. This inclusion provided a vision for intervention and the development of social awareness and values in students from a humanistic, critical, and ecological paradigm (Picón & Frausto, 2022).

The importance of cross-cutting approaches in university curricula, such as environmental education, peace education, or education for equality. One idea supporting this argument is that these approaches allow for a comprehensive education of students, as they do not merely focus on the transmission of technical knowledge, but also promote critical and social awareness.

The inclusion of these themes facilitates the interrelationship between various areas of knowledge, helping students understand global issues from a multidisciplinary and humanistic perspective (Figure 1).

## Box 1



**Figure 1**

Social inclusion activity at UACAm

*Source: Valencia Gutiérrez, 2024*

For example, peace education combined with environmental education fosters an ecopedagogical approach, where students not only learn to resolve human conflicts but also to interact ethically with their environment (Niño-Gutiérrez, 2023). This type of education promotes the development of citizens who act not only based on knowledge but also from fundamental values such as social justice and environmental sustainability, crucial factors for the development of a more equitable society, aware of its social and ecological responsibilities. Thus, the vision that education must have a transformative impact on society is strengthened, beyond the simple acquisition of technical skills (Niño-Gutiérrez, 2023).

It is necessary for universities to reflect on their responsibility to redefine their role in relation to their social function, taking on the challenges posed by a constantly changing society. From this perspective, the importance of considering a paradigm of peace culture is highlighted, and consequently, generating alternatives to prepare the actors involved in the social fabric through education (Alcaraz et al., 2023).

A notion that validates this statement is that universities should not only be centres for the transmission of technical knowledge, but also agents of social change. In facing current challenges—such as inequality, social conflicts, and environmental crises—universities must incorporate a paradigm of peace culture into their educational programs to prepare students as transformative actors within the social fabric.

This approach requires educational institutions to redefine their responsibilities, shifting towards a model of education that prioritizes social justice, equity, and sustainability. By adopting a peace culture-based approach, universities can develop educational alternatives that empower students not only to identify and solve problems but also to promote peaceful coexistence and ethical conflict resolution. This type of education transforms university training into a process that not only prepares competent professionals but also critical and engaged citizens committed to creating a more just and equitable social environment.

Any effort made by the national and international community to build a world of peace and social justice would be ineffective if the deep sources of conflict resolution from university educational centres are not taken into account. These sources form the foundation for guiding values, attitudes, knowledge, and skills that will shape the competent professionals of the future (Islas et al., 2018).

Any national or international effort to promote peace and social justice will be ineffective if universities do not play an active role in teaching conflict resolution. An idea that supports this statement is that universities should serve as the core of social transformation since they are the institutions responsible for educating future professionals. These professionals, if educated within a culture of peace, will be equipped with the necessary skills, attitudes, and values to address and resolve conflicts ethically and peacefully, which is essential for building democratic and equitable societies.

Therefore, pedagogical processes that educate students in peace culture must be developed, facilitating the understanding of the process leading to its full realization, healthy coexistence, democratic participation, and conflict resolution (Rojas, 2018).

The development of these pedagogical processes is essential to ensure that students not only become competent professionals but also active citizens who promote peace and justice within their communities.

In this context, the role of universities is fundamental to guarantee that the values of peace are not only taught but lived and applied in everyday life, forming the foundation for sustainable and effective social transformation.

Peace education has also been recognized for its capacity to strengthen self-esteem, allowing individuals to overcome the fear of expressing their own opinions and accepting those of others to find solutions or simply enjoy a friendly conversation. Although peace education has always been an ideal for achieving appropriate and lasting coexistence, its meaning has varied over time, presenting various, sometimes contradictory, paths to achieve it due to the diversity of values it encompasses (Castillo & Ramírez, 2020).

The impact of peace education on strengthening self-esteem and individuals' ability to express their opinions and accept those of others is highlighted. A perspective that confirms this statement is that peace education not only has a technical component for conflict resolution but also promotes emotional development and personal empowerment. By fostering confidence in communication, peace education equips individuals to engage in constructive dialogues, which is crucial for seeking peaceful solutions.

Moreover, the variability in its meaning over time, as noted in the quote, reflects the complexity of the values that peace education encompasses, such as justice, tolerance, and solidarity. These values, although sometimes seemingly contradictory, contribute to the creation of spaces where dialogue and peaceful coexistence are possible. Therefore, peace education not only focuses on teaching conflict resolution skills but also on creating a culture of mutual respect and understanding, which is essential for lasting coexistence in diverse societies.

The development of a peace education program, both in formal and informal education contexts, requires the incorporation of activities and content that allow for the experience, reflection, and projection of actions around the values and principles that constitute it (Santiago et al., 2021).

A concept that corroborates this assertion is that for peace education to be effective, it must be experiential and transformative, allowing students to internalize the principles of peace through practical experiences. By integrating activities that promote critical reflection, such as dialogue circles or conflict mediation in educational settings, students not only learn about peace theoretically but also apply it in their daily lives. This practical approach reinforces peace principles, such as justice and equity, and contributes to the creation of a sustainable peace culture within society. Additionally, informal education, through community workshops or extracurricular activities, allows for broader social projection, extending the impact of peace education beyond the classroom and generating positive change in the social and community environment.

Therefore, an experiential approach to peace education is essential to develop individuals not only capable of understanding the concepts of peace but also of living and practicing them, thus promoting lasting and effective social transformation.

Peace has been associated with a series of practices and values that have led to its conceptualization as both an exercise and a universal right, as well as a field of analysis and object of study in the social sciences and even in the philosophy of language. The latter has articulated its ethical and political dimension, proposing its understanding through public argumentation and deliberation. Actions such as sharing, learning, socializing, or values like compassion, friendship, and empathy are often associated with a state of tranquillity that is an inherent part of human life (Gómez, 2019).

A perspective that confirms this statement is that peace is not simply the absence of conflict, but rather the active participation in practices of empathy, compassion, and friendship. These values, beyond their individual connotation, have a profound social impact, as they foster harmonious coexistence and promote mutual respect.

From the perspective of social sciences and the philosophy of language, peace acquires an ethical and political dimension, as it requires public deliberation and a space for dialogue where the rights and dignity of individuals are recognized. This approach highlights the need to conceptualize peace as a multidimensional phenomenon, extending from the personal realm to the community and global levels. The fact that everyday actions such as sharing, learning, and socializing are associated with peace demonstrates that this concept is deeply intertwined with human nature and that its practice requires an active and collective construction. This underscores the importance of educating in values such as empathy and solidarity, which are fundamental to achieving sustainable peace in both interpersonal relationships and the broader social and political spheres.

It is crucial to reflect on the fact that peace is not merely an additional topic in the curriculum but a cross-cutting axis that permeates all dimensions of higher education in Mexico.

Therefore, it is deemed necessary to implement peace education as an integral component in higher education institutions (HEIs) (Calvario, 2024).

An idea that supports this argument is that peace, as a fundamental value, must be incorporated into all academic disciplines and not confined solely to areas such as social sciences or civic education. By doing so, an integral education is created that not only promotes academic development but also fosters the personal and social growth of students.

Integrating peace education into the university system ensures that future professionals graduate not only with technical skills but also with the ability to resolve conflicts peacefully, promote justice, and actively participate in building a more equitable society.

This approach is crucial in a global context where violence, inequality, and conflicts are constant challenges. By embedding peace as a cross-cutting principle, students are shaped into socially responsible individuals who are equipped to drive positive change in their communities.

Moreover, the transversal integration of peace in the university curriculum addresses the need to transform educational environments into spaces that not only teach but also practice and embody the values of peace. This is essential for generating a sustainable culture of peace, extending from campus life to interactions in the professional and social spheres, thus strengthening the social fabric in Mexico and beyond.

Education in the 21st century presents unprecedented challenges driven by advances in science, artificial intelligence, and the understanding of brain function, which compels a rethinking of education from new perspectives.

A fundamental perspective is peace education, which empowers citizens and raises awareness of the importance of building a culture of peace. This process can only be solidified through the incorporation of a specific subject aimed at this goal, as peace is taught and learned, and conflict is transformed (Loyola, 2023).

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An idea that supports this statement is that peace education becomes an essential tool to address these challenges, not only because it empowers citizens but also because it fosters critical and ethical awareness regarding the construction of peaceful and just societies.

The rapid pace of technological and scientific advances requires education to shape individuals capable not only of handling these technologies but of doing so with an ethical approach. This is where peace education plays a fundamental role, as it prepares students to transform conflicts and promote dialogue in an increasingly interconnected world. By incorporating peace as a specific subject, it ensures that peace is not only taught and learned but lived, helping students internalize the values of cooperation, tolerance, and respect.

Moreover, peace education responds to global issues that technological advances, such as artificial intelligence, could exacerbate, such as inequality and social polarization. By including this training, educational institutions not only prepare students to face these challenges but also to transform them into opportunities to promote understanding and equity. This reinforces the importance of a comprehensive educational approach that not only trains competent professionals but also ethical citizens committed to building a peaceful and sustainable world.

Education must be grounded in a clear intentionality, which positions the field of pedagogy as the appropriate domain for reflecting on the intentionality of educational acts in the various environments designed for this purpose. In this way, pedagogy is defined as the philosophical framework that guides both the understanding of the educational process and the purpose of education itself.

A statement that supports this position is that pedagogy is not simply a set of techniques for transmitting knowledge, but rather a discipline that articulates the ethical and social purpose of education. This approach implies that education cannot be neutral; it must have a clear purpose: to form critical citizens committed to social transformation.

Intentionality in pedagogy allows educational actions to be designed with a defined purpose, which in turn guides the development of methodologies and practices that respond to the specific needs of students and society. By positioning pedagogy as the philosophical framework, its capacity to guide educational decisions towards the construction of a system that not only instructs but also cultivates values and attitudes contributing to the common good is recognized. In this sense, pedagogy provides the conceptual tools necessary to understand the ultimate purpose of education: to promote the holistic development of students, fostering both their cognitive skills and their ethical competencies.

The Chair of Peace and Peace Education does not represent new subjects or areas within the school curriculum, as these themes have been implicit in the development of citizenship competencies, principles and values, ethics, and human rights, among other subjects.

The goal is to establish a formal structure, considering that each educational institution has the autonomy to design its own institutional educational plan and curriculum (Rivas et al., 2019).

The Chair of Peace and Peace Education does not introduce completely new content into the school curriculum; rather, it formalizes themes that are already implicit in the development of citizenship competencies, ethical values, and human rights. One idea supporting this argument is that peace and peace education are fundamental to the student's holistic formation and are already present in many disciplines, though not always explicitly. Formalizing these themes through a dedicated chair allows them to be structured more coherently and systematically within the educational plan.

The autonomy of each educational institution to design its own curriculum is key to ensuring that peace values are integrated in a contextualized and relevant way, addressing the specific needs of each educational community.

This allows peace education to be viewed not as an isolated addition but as an integral part of ethical and civic education.

By formalizing peace education, institutions are empowered to develop conscious and responsible citizens, capable of promoting social justice, peaceful coexistence, and the defense of human rights in their communities.

This approach also responds to the growing demand to educate individuals who are not only competent in their fields of knowledge but also committed to building a more just and equitable society. Thus, the formalization of peace education within the curriculum is a crucial step in transforming educational environments into spaces for social transformation.

Tolerance, respect, and diversity are fundamental pillars of the culture of peace.

Therefore, it is crucial to understand how young people perceive, value, and interpret this social phenomenon, as this understanding provides essential information for designing intervention and promotion strategies for the culture of peace that are effective and meaningful for this group.

Only through a deep understanding of social representations can we move toward a more just, supportive, and peaceful society (Calderón & Jiménez, 2024).

Tolerance, respect, and diversity are essential pillars of the culture of peace, highlighting the importance of understanding how young people perceive and interpret these values. A notion that validates this statement is that, in order to design effective strategies for peace promotion and intervention, it is crucial to understand the social representations that young people hold of these concepts.

Only through a deep understanding of these representations can educational programs and campaigns be created that truly resonate with them and promote the internalization of these values.

The success of any peace promotion strategy lies in its ability to resonate with the experiences and perspectives of young people. Youth perceptions of tolerance and respect are influenced by their social, cultural, and familial environments, making it necessary to address these differences in order to design inclusive interventions.

Understanding these diverse social representations not only facilitates the design of more effective programs but also allows for better adaptation of initiatives to specific contexts, fostering a more inclusive and sustainable peace.

Lastly, this understanding is key to promoting a more just and supportive society, as it facilitates the creation of spaces for dialogue where differences are respected and valued. By understanding how young people interpret these values, institutions can foster peaceful coexistence that encourages mutual respect and equity, which is essential for advancing toward a more cohesive and peaceful society.

The Autonomous University of Campeche has recognized the importance of strengthening the culture of peace within the institution by integrating all actions related to this theme into the Responsible Unit (RU) for University Inclusion and Equality, created in May 2019, although the culture of peace program had been initiated in 2003.

This integration seeks to coordinate activities that contribute to strengthening the culture of peace, equality, and university inclusion, areas that converge in their objectives.

To this end, peace committees were established in each faculty, with the faculty directors acting as presidents of the respective committees.

These committees include, among their members, the academic secretary, the person responsible for tutoring, the person responsible for university health, the person responsible for interculturality, the person responsible for culture and sports, the person responsible for gender, and the person responsible for peace.

The peace committees coordinate with the University Equality Unit to organize work meetings, establish an annual activity agenda, including workshops, conferences, and peace circles, with the goal of raising awareness among the entire university community: faculty, students, and administrative staff. Additionally, continuous training is provided to committee members.

Each committee member is assigned specific activities to be carried out annually, and as a committee, they meet to conduct joint activities directly coordinated by the RU. These activities are essential for the holistic education of the University's students, so it is crucial that they are planned in a coordinated manner to avoid scheduling conflicts that could affect the awareness-raising process. Furthermore, these actions contribute to the mainstreaming of both programs into the curriculum of all the institution's educational programs (Calvario, 2024).

Each member has specific annual responsibilities that, when organized collectively, allow for a coherent and well-structured execution of educational actions. This process is fundamental for the holistic development of students, as it ensures that educational programs are not only implemented without interference but also aligned with the institution's overall curricular goals.

A perspective that confirms this statement is that the coordination of activities within a university is key to avoiding the duplication of efforts and scheduling conflicts, which can negatively impact awareness-raising and educational processes.

By managing actions collectively, not only is the integral approach to education strengthened, but it also ensures the mainstreaming of values such as equity, peace, and inclusion across all the institution's educational programs.

Moreover, the integration of these programs into the curriculum helps consolidate an institutional culture that promotes social awareness and justice, impacting both the educational community and the broader social environment. The importance of a coordinated approach guarantees that students experience a holistic and coherent education aligned with the university's principles.

In response to the central purpose of analysing how the Autonomous University of Campeche has strengthened the culture of peace, it is essential to focus on how the integration of the culture of peace into the University's Equality and Inclusion Unit has played a pivotal role in institutional transformation.

This integration signifies more than a mere addition to the curriculum; it reflects a strategic effort to embed peace education into the university's core functions, such as teaching, research, and community engagement. By incorporating these themes into academic programs, the University fosters an environment that promotes justice, equality, and the recognition of human rights (Figure 2).

**Box 2**



**Figure 2**

Peace culture activity
*Source: Valencia Gutiérrez, 2024*

Additionally, this integration serves as a model for how higher education institutions can shape socially conscious citizens. Through coordinated initiatives, such as workshops, conferences, and peace circles, the University has successfully cultivated a culture that encourages critical reflection and peaceful conflict resolution, both within the institution and in the broader community. The focus on educating students in values that promote equity ensures that the impact of these efforts extends beyond the university, contributing to the construction of a more just and peaceful society.

This analysis highlights the crucial role that universities play in fostering social change by actively engaging students and staff in peacebuilding processes.

## Conclusions

The integration of the culture of peace into the University Equality and Inclusion Unit has significantly strengthened the development of this culture at the Autonomous University of Campeche.

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This integration has been achieved through a detailed work plan that encompasses both the actions related to the culture of peace and those of University Equality and Inclusion, reflecting a coordinated effort that enables the effective execution of activities. This meticulous planning has successfully raised awareness among a substantial portion of the university population, avoiding activity overlap and enhancing their impact through cross-curricular integration, thereby maximizing the expected outcomes.

The curricular mainstreaming at the UACam has continuously incorporated both the culture of peace and University Equality and Inclusion since the implementation of the study plans in 2009 to the present. The strategies proposed so far have proven effective in achieving the stated objectives.

The integration of the culture of peace into the Equality and Inclusion Unit at the Autonomous University of Campeche (UACam), alongside its incorporation into the academic curriculum, has strengthened the university's core functions by fostering an environment of justice and equity within the university community.

This integration ensures that the culture of peace permeates all areas of the institution, from management to research, teaching, and outreach. Moreover, through activities such as workshops, conferences, and peace circles, continuous awareness has been raised within the university, promoting greater understanding of human rights and peaceful coexistence. This strategy not only impacts the institution but also contributes to the formation of generations committed to building a more just and equitable society.

## Recommendation

It is recommended that the Autonomous University of Campeche continues to deepen the integration of the culture of peace and University Equality and Inclusion by establishing evaluation and monitoring mechanisms to measure the impact of these actions on the university community.

Additionally, it would be beneficial to expand these initiatives at the regional and national levels through collaboration with other higher education institutions, with the aim of sharing best practices and strengthening an educational network committed to promoting a culture of peace and equity. The systematization of these experiences could serve as a model for other universities, driving positive change in the educational system that extends to society as a whole.

## Declarations

## Conflict of interest

The authors declare no interest conflict. They have no known competing financial interests or personal relationships that could have appeared to influence the article reported in this article.

## Author contribution

*Niño-Gutiérrez, Naú Silverio:* Final literature review, writing-review and editing, investigation, writing the article in the English language, and writing-final draft of the paper.

*Valencia-Gutiérrez Marvel del Carmen:* Conceptualization, literature review, conducted primary research, preliminary preparation of the paper, project administration and, methodology.

## Abbreviations

EIU=Equality and Inclusion Unit
Autonomous University of Campeche (UACam)
HEIs= Higher Education Institution
RU= Responsible Unit
UACam= Autonomous University of Campeche

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